



Rep. Joe Scarborough (R)

Elected 1994; 3rd term

In Washington: Scarborough came to office as part of the GOP Class of 1994, which argued for strict fealty to the principles of the "Republican revolution": fiscal restraint and smaller government. Like others in this group, Scarborough was a young newcomer to elective office who was impatient for dramatic change. He and several colleagues even criticized the leadership when it compromised with the Democrats.

But after an attempt to overthrow Speaker Newt Gingrich failed, Scarborough backed off a bit. "Impatience still boils beneath the surface," he says, but he understands better that it can take time to get things done. He told a newspaper interviewer, "I've learned it is important to realize there is more than one way to reach a goal. ... We've got to recognize that within the American form of government, change doesn't come overnight."

Scarborough still casts a reliably conservative vote on fiscal matters, but his views on offshore oil drilling and some other environmental issues are more moderate. And while he professes no interest in lingering long in Washington, he has invested energy in such complicated topics as intellectual property rights and international human rights, broadening his earlier image as a one-dimensional ideologue.

During the first year of the 104th, Scarborough was one of the more visible and oft-quoted members of the huge GOP freshman class. His conservative views on fiscal policy seemed so absolute as to preclude compromise with President Clinton on a deficit-reduction plan.

"I have yet to apologize for anything we've done because we were right," Scarborough said. "We're not to be loved. We're to be respected. ... Who loves the person who makes them balance their checkbook? I care more about the future of this country than I do about being loved."

In 1995, when Clinton vetoed the GOP balanced-budget plan, provoking a weeks-long standoff with Congress that resulted in parts of the federal government shutting down, Scarborough blamed the closure on Clinton's refusal to accept the GOP proposal. As the impasse continued into 1996, Scarborough opposed a compromise plan to end the stalemate. He later said, "We made a commitment last fall to stare down the president, and we blinked."

His discontent continued in 1997. Scarborough was one of 26 Republicans who voted against a bipartisan balanced-budget deal negotiated with the White House. He said it did not provide enough in spending cuts and tax relief. He and a handful of like-minded GOP lawmakers eventually led the abortive coup attempt against Gingrich.

Scarborough later acknowledged that they handled the situation inappropriately, but he continued to oppose elements of the budget deal. He praised Gingrich's negotiating efforts on the tax cut part of the package, but in July he was one of just 32 Republicans to vote against the spending cut portion, arguing that it didn't go far enough in reducing the deficit.

Scarborough backed a new slate of candidates for GOP leadership posts as the 106th Congress began, including Robert L. Livingston of Louisiana for Speaker, Steve Largent of Oklahoma for majority leader and J.C. Watts of Oklahoma for chairman of the Republican Conference. Largent, a fellow rebel in the Class of 1994, lost to Dick Armey, prompting Scarborough to note, "Republicans have a track record of not learning from past mistakes."

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COMMITTEES

Armed Services (Military Installations & Facilities; Military Research & Development); Government Reform (Civil Service - chairman; District of Columbia); Judiciary (Immigration & Claims; Commercial & Administrative Law)

HOMETOWN

Pensacola

BORN

April 9, 1963, Doraville, Ga.

RELIGION

Baptist

FAMILY

two children

EDUCATION

U. of Alabama, B.A. 1985; U. of Florida, J.D. 1990

CAREER

Lawyer

POLITICAL HIGHLIGHTS

No previous office

ELECTION RESULTS

1998 GENERAL

Joe Scarborough (R)		unopposed
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1998 PRIMARY

Joe Scarborough (R)		unopposed
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1996 GENERAL

Joe Scarborough (R)	175,648	72.5%
Kevin Beck (D)	66,415	27.4%

PREVIOUS WINNING PERCENTAGES

1994 (62%)

DISTRICT VOTE FOR PRESIDENT

	DEM	GOP	IND
1996:	31%	59%	10%
1992:	26%	51%	23%

... We'll see if he [Armed] learns."

In his third term, Scarborough has now worked into positions of responsibility himself, moving beyond the luxury of newcomer-outsider status he enjoyed in his first two terms.

He is the new chairman of the Government Reform panel's Civil Service Subcommittee. He gave up a seat on the Education and the Workforce Committee in the 105th, citing his workload on the Government Reform and National Security (since renamed Armed Services) panels and a GOP education task force. In the 106th, he added a seat on Judiciary.

Scarborough wants to eliminate the Education Department, which he says has done little to improve the quality of U.S. schools. "The great federal experiment in education is over," he said. "It failed. It is time to move on."

Scarborough is a fiscal conservative, who for the 106th unsuccessfully sought a seat on the Appropriations Committee from which to continue his grass-roots effort to restrain spending. In 1997, he voted against continued subsidies for tobacco farmers and sugar growers, and in 1998, he opposed a massive highway authorization measure, citing the need for spending restraint.

But on the Armed Services panel Scarborough is a stout defender of Pentagon spending and a supporter of NASA's space station project. Furthermore, in the 104th, he worked to fend off preliminary efforts to close or consolidate some military bases in his area.

In the latter half of the 104th and in the 105th, he was active on the foreign affairs scene, authoring an amendment in 1997 to impose sanctions against Sudan in response to what he said was slave trading and other human rights abuses.

Scarborough firmly opposed sending U.S. troops as peacekeepers to Bosnia, arguing that Clinton officials "have not been able to make their case that getting involved in a three-way civil war halfway across the world is worth the death of young American men and young American women that would be sent to Bosnia."

He also wants to save money by ending U.S. participation in the United Nations, including peacekeeping operations.

Scarborough hews to the conservative line on such social issues as abortion policy and gun owners' rights. But on some key environmental issues, he has been more moderate. In the 105th, he championed legislation to impose a permanent ban on drilling off the northwest Florida coast. In July 1995, he joined with GOP moderates to oppose conservatives' efforts to limit the Environmental Protection Agency's authority.

He was one of just 30 Republicans who voted "no" on at least two of the four articles of impeachment against President Clinton. But he was adamant about his "yes" votes on the remaining two articles: "The president's personal life is just that, personal. But when his words and deeds seriously undermine the rule of law, the issue becomes public and the consequences dramatic," Scarborough said. He rejected arguments that impeachment would undermine the stability of the government.

Off the floor, Scarborough is casual in both dress and speech, lacing his conversations with references to contemporary music or entertainment that often escape older colleagues.

A songwriter (he's penned more than 300 songs) and bass guitar player, Scarborough and some friends from Pensacola get together now and then to play rock-and-roll music in a group called "Joe." Earlier in his congressional career, he briefly joined with some fellow Republicans in a band called "The Amendments." Other members included then-Rep. Scott L. Klug of Wisconsin and Reps. John M. McHugh of New York and Jim Nussle of Iowa. Given that background, it was no surprise in 1998 when Scarborough

FLORIDA 1

Panhandle — Pensacola; Fort Walton Beach

Some residents of the 1st refer to the area as "Lower Alabama," and in spirit the area is much closer to the Old South than to, say, Miami. The district, which stretches from west of Tallahassee to Pensacola, has several large military bases and a mostly white population. Its Gulf Coast beaches and open spaces attract both tourists and residents seeking a small-town feel. The 1st widens at its eastern edge to include some of Bay County's pristine beaches.

Although voter registration is split between the parties, the 1st is a rock-solid conservative district. Its Democrats are more "Dixiecrats" than liberal, and several local and state officials from the area have switched to the GOP after decades as Democrats. The military presence also plays a significant role in politics; nearly one in seven residents of Okaloosa County is a military employee.

Tourism, health care and retirement communities have helped boost an economy slowed by manufacturing losses during the 1980s and early '90s. Growth here is slower than Florida's southern regions but could accelerate with the development of land held by St. Joe's Corp., a paper and real estate giant.

TOP EMPLOYERS

Baptist Hospital, Pensacola, 3,000-4,999; Solutia Inc., Cantonment, 3,000-4,999; Corry Station, Pensacola, 3,000-4,999; Sacred Heart Medical Group, Pensacola, 1,000-2,999

MAJOR INDUSTRY

Defense, health care, tourism

MILITARY BASES

Pensacola Naval Air Station, 11,192 military, 4,438 civilian; Eglin Air Force Base, 7,751 military, 5,180 civilian; Hurlburt Field, 7,514 military, 805 civilian; Whiting Field Naval Air Station, 2,000 military, 1,062 civilian; Naval Technical Training Center Corry Station, 2,030 military, 268 civilian (1998)

POPULATION

561,856 (1990)

CITIES

Pensacola, 59,162 (1997); West Pensacola, 22,107 (unincorporated) (1990); Fort Walton Beach, 21,933 (1997)

PEOPLE

69% urban; 11% age 65+ (ranks 20 of 23 in state; bottom third nationally); 59% married couples, 26% married couples with children; 18% college educated (ranks 13 of 23 in state; middle third nationally); 57% white collar (ranks 16 of 23 in state; middle third nationally), 25% blue collar (ranks sixth of 23 in state; middle third nationally) (1990)

RACE

84% white, 13% black, 2% Asian; 2% Hispanic origin (1990)

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

\$25,866 (ranks 14 of 23 in state; middle third nationally) (1990)

UNUSUAL FEATURES

Famous "Blue Angels" flight group housed at Pensacola Naval Air Station; the Walton County town of Seaside was the setting for the movie "The Truman Show."

KEY VOTES

1998	
Y	Impeach President Clinton for grand jury perjury
N	Impeach President Clinton for civil suit perjury
N	Pass omnibus spending bill
N	Give president fast-track trade negotiating authority
N	Pass campaign finance overhaul
Y	Pass GOP-drafted managed health care overhaul
Y	Prohibit affirmative action in higher education admissions
1997	
Y	Support taxpayer-financed school tuition vouchers
N	Support aid to international family planning organizations

INTEREST GROUPS

	AFL-CIO	ADA	CCUS	ACU
1998	n/a	10%	78%	96%
1997	0%	10%	70%	100%
1996	18%	10%	94%	95%
1995	8%	15%	88%	96%

CQ VOTE STUDIES

	PARTY UNITY		PRESIDENTIAL SUPPORT	
	Support	Oppose	Support	Oppose
1998	85%	8%	24%	71%
1997	87%	8%	23%	77%
1996	82%	10%	30%	67%
1995	89%	7%	22%	74%

VOTING PARTICIPATION

1998	93%
1997	94%
1996	94%
1995	95%

opposed legislation that would exempt small businesses from paying music licensing fees. He complained that the measure trampled on the property rights of musicians. “For us to just gut their ability to earn a living ... is absolutely ridiculous,” he said.

At Home: A lawyer who made news in 1993 by leading a protest against a tax increase sought by the Pensacola City Council, Scarborough decided the next year to try for the House. His chances for election improved greatly when, on his 31st birthday in April 1994, veteran Democratic Rep. Earl Hutto announced plans to retire.

Scarborough was part of a five-way battle for the Republican nomination, and several other candidates had more political experience. Promoting a platform of “Retaking America” that included government reform and states’ rights, Scarborough pushed his message on a local cable TV talk show and sought out churchgoing voters. Scarborough assailed his most serious challenger, former Pensacola City Council member Lois Benson, as a liberal.

A supporter of abortion rights and the best-funded Republican aspirant, Benson ran ahead of Scarborough in the first-round voting, but just barely. In the runoff, Benson sought to sow seeds of doubt in voters’ minds about Scarborough, noting that he had blamed the nation’s budgetary problems partly on the increasing costs of “middle-class entitlements,” such as Social Security. But Scarborough’s more conservative profile was in step with voters’ mood in 1994, and he won nomination with 54 percent of the vote.

Democrats nominated lawyer and car dealer Vince Whibbs Jr., a conservative whose father had been mayor of Pensacola. But no matter Whibbs’ ideology and roots, the electorate in the 1st was not of a mind to support a Democrat. Scarborough won going away. He had another easy time of it in 1996, taking 73 percent of the vote, and in 1998 Democrats did not field a candidate.